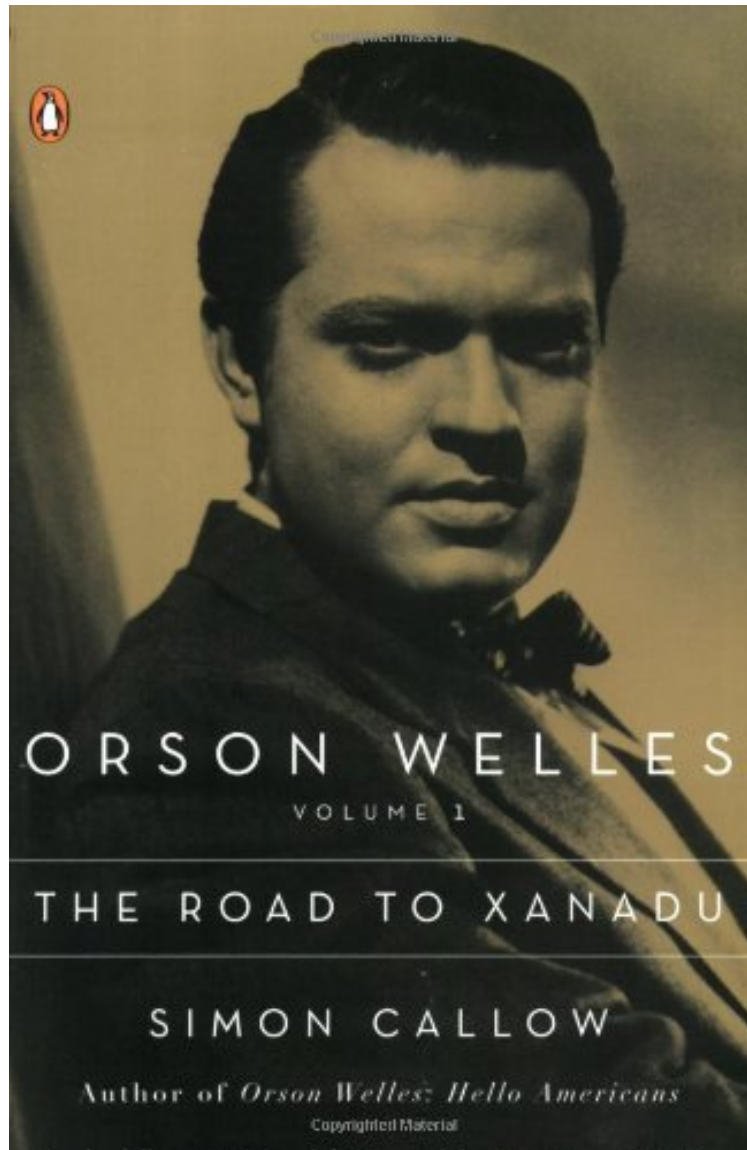


## Orson Welles, Volume 1: The Road to Xanadu (Orson Welles / Simon Callow)

*Simon Callow*

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**Simon Callow : Orson Welles, Volume 1: The Road to Xanadu (Orson Welles / Simon Callow)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Orson Welles, Volume 1: The Road to Xanadu (Orson Welles / Simon Callow):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Orson Welles did more before he was 10 than most of us will in a

lifetime.....or at least he tells you he did.By Eric Orson Welles did more before he was 10 than most of us will in a lifetime.....or at least he tells you he did. The mystery of OW is still in full effect but Simon Callow helps the reader wade through the mire and stories that seem like BS. It's a damn fine read. Makes you want to see VOODOO MACBETH for yourself. Luckily there's enough internet resources to listen to some of the Mercury Radio Broadcasts as well ( more than just War Of The Worlds ).0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Richard StewartThanks.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bio of a unique geniusBy Dean YeagleWhat a life, what a genius. Can't imagine a more authoritative bio of Welles.

A splendidly entertaining, definitive work.Entertainment WeeklyIn this first installment of his masterful biography, Simon Callow captures the chameleonic genius of Orson Welles as only an actor/director deeply rooted in the entertainment industry could. Here is Welles's prodigious childhood; his youth in New York, with its fraught partnership with John Houseman and the groundbreaking triumph of his all-black Macbeth; the pioneering radio work that culminated in the notorious 1938 broadcast of War of the Worlds; and finally, his work in Hollywood, including an authoritative account of the making of Citizen Kane. Rich in detail and insight, this is far and away the definitive look at Orson Welles a figure even more extraordinary than the myths that have surrounded him.

.com Now in paperback, Callow's vastly entertaining chronicle of Welles's first 26 years seems even finer than it did in 1995. The author's ability to skewer his subject's evasions and lies while retaining critical affection for him is perhaps explained by the fact that Callow, an actor himself, understands the need to mythologize. Welles's innovative theatrical work in the 1930s has never been better described or analyzed. Even such oft-told sagas as the War of the Worlds broadcast and the filming of Citizen Kane gain new dimension from Callow's intelligent treatment.From Library JournalActor/director Callow (Being an Actor, St. Martin's, 1992) offers the first of two volumes on the life of Orson Welles, covering through the release of Citizen Kane. Callow's stated goal is to put Welles into the context of his times. He's also extremely skeptical at taking his self-promoting subject at his word, which places Callow at odds with previous Welles chroniclers Barbara Leaming (Orson Welles, Viking, 1985) and, to some extent, Peter Bogdanovich (This Is Orson Welles, LJ 11/15/92). This is by far the best-written and most balanced biography of the elusive Welles, though its massively detailed descriptions of his theater work will leave some readers behind (the author originally set out to cover only that aspect of Welles's career). Recommended for most film collections in public and academic libraries.?Thomas Wiener, editor, "Satelite DIRECT"Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. A splendidly entertaining, definitive work. Entertainment Weekly This riveting, revealing portrait of the legendary director and star is unlikely to be surpassed. Los Angeles Times Book A wonderfully readable, sharp, shrewd and evenhanded biography . . . Callow is a witty and feeling biographer. Chicago Tribune Callow is in control all the way. The New York Times Book With a keen attention to detail, he brings Welles back to life for us, and brings to his portrait the critical skill of extrapolating the artists personality form his work. The Wall Street Journal Simon Callows tumultuous, riveting, and admirably researched biography . . . has the energy of revelation. The Boston Globe Callow touches nothing without leaving huge fingerprints of his charm, wit and superbly encompassing mind, quite equal to the wit and invention of Welles himself . . . This is a feast whose every course is flavored with humanity and superfine intelligence. The Philadelphia Inquirer Brilliant. . . Other accounts of the boy wonder from Wisconsin are now rendered obsolete by Simon Callows massive The Road to Xanadu. . . [Callow] has outperformed every previous biographer in the arena of research. Fort Worth Star Telegram Exceptionally perceptive . . . not only enormously entertaining but also hugely informative. . . Callow has us hungering for more. San Jose Mercury News [Callow] excels at what must have been his most frustrating task: analyzing theater work he could not see for himself. The book expertly evokes Welles's wildly-inventive productions. . . As Callow meticulously shows, George Orson Welles knew acclaim and misuse from early childhood. Time Easily the best Welles biography. . . Callows expertise as actor and director gives his accounts of Welles's work a unique authenticity. Newsweek A brilliant biography, which builds on the research of its predecessors while judiciously taking the measure of this human tornado, bringing him down to earth. . . Callow is a whiz . . . because he has a sharp-tongued, fearlessly judgmental, epigrammatic style that cuts through dithering. Newsday Welles might seem a difficult subject for a new biography. The legend is already pretty much written in stone. Callows achievement is threefold: he embraces his subject with such gallumphing energy that the extraordinary power of his subject is conveyed as if for the first, fascinated time; he attempts a sober reassessment, trying to get an honest measure of someone who seemed larger than life without in any petty way cutting him down to size; and he provides a genuinely interesting actors view of the actor. . . It is this which makes The Road to Xanadu feel, improbably, like a fresh journey rather than another weary, ironic retreading of the route. The Times (London) A knock-down, brass-bound, copper-bottomed triumph. It is a big, fat book and it is tremendous fun to read. . . Callows style has much in common with his acting: the text is full-bodied, rich, fruity and dense. . . It is Simon Callows triumph that at the end of this book Orson Welles comes before us just as Oscar Wilde did at the end of Richard Ellmann's superb biography a towering figure, laughing . . . so generous, so amusing, and so right. Daily Telegraph In this monumental two-part work . . . Welles at last has a life to match his bulk. Callow confirms the old truism that it

takes one to know one. Himself a man of the theater, he has the literary craft, too, to make an imaginative leap into Orson Welles psyche, inhabit his life, not simply chronicle it. It is the best book I have read that explains a fabulous figure in terms of the reality of his own life. Evening Standard The book is a miracle of research, and Mr. Callow writes well and with a miss-nothing intelligence. Welles is brought vividly to life; we hear and see him. It is an important book; it has resonance, it contains worlds; it satisfies. The Irish Times A superbly wrought, aesthetically and psychologically acute portrait of Welles sheer, undisciplined genius. . . . Not since Francois Truffauts book of Hitchcock has an arts biographer possessed such a professional and intuitive understanding of his subject . . . all accomplished in a highly literate, epigrammatic style that makes this biography a sumptuous pleasure to read Kirkus s Himself a protean, larger-than-life character, Simon Callow is uniquely qualified to plumb the depths of Orson Welles. As a mere writer, it pains me to admit that it has taken an actor to produce one of the finest thespian biographies of recent years. Anthony Holden, author of Laurence Olivier